

# SRI LANKAN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS DURING EELAM WAR IV

Comparative Analysis of Galula and Rajapaksa Models  
to Determine Future Applicability

A Monograph

by

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## ABSTRACT

**SRI LANKAN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS DURING EELAM WAR IV: COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF GALULA AND RAJAPAKSA MODELS TO DETERMINE FUTURE APPLICABILITY**, by Major Azat Sajjad Khan, 51 pages.

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The study explains the prevailing environment and nature of both the insurgencies with emphasis on how the counterinsurgencies were planned and executed. It highlights the principles of both the Galula and Rajapaksa Models to draw similarities and differences. By carrying out a comparative analysis the research aims to assist future planners and scholars in understanding the dynamic nature of a counterinsurgency operation with the aim of ascertaining the future applicability of the Rajapaksa Counterinsurgency Model.

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## ACRONYMS

ALN	Armee de Liberation Nationale
COA	Courses of Action
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CRUA	Comite Revolutionnaire d’Unite et d’ Action
FLN	Front de Liberation Nationale
GSL	Government of Sri Lanka
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

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## MONOGRAPH

### Introduction

A cursory analysis of the global environment strongly indicates that nations will continue to face the threat of terrorism, insurgency and separatism. The unpredictable and asymmetric nature of such conflicts has posed serious challenges for nations encountering them. Its undefined and protracted nature demands radical adaptation in order to initially understand and subsequently suppress the insurgency. This monograph examines the Rajapaksa counterinsurgency model applied by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka during Eelam War IV (2005 to 2009) to defeat an insurgency by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Galula's counterinsurgency theory would serve as a historical construct to carry out comparative analysis with the purpose of ascertaining the applicability of the Rajapaksa Model in a future counterinsurgency (COIN) conflict.

For almost three decades (1983-2009) Sri Lanka struggled against a combined threat of insurgency, terrorism, and separation from the LTTE.<sup>1</sup> Tamils who comprise eighteen percent of the total population of Sri Lanka wanted a separate state in the northeastern part of the country.<sup>2</sup> To achieve their goals, the LTTE resorted to conventional military operations, guerilla warfare and terrorism with the financial support of a strong Tamil Diaspora. The efforts of the Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) can broadly be divided into two periods: first, from 1983 to 2004 (Eelam War I, II, III); and second, from 2005 to 2009 (Eelam War IV). The first period saw three iterations of the Eelam War and was replete with numerous uncoordinated military operations lacking the desired political will and leadership. Each war ended with a cease fire

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Peebles, *The History of Sri Lanka* (London, UK: Greenwood Press, 2006),1-2.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Sri Lanka," <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn5249.htm> (accessed 11 August 2012).

agreement which was not respected by either side.<sup>3</sup> The second period started with the narrow victory of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the President of Sri Lanka in November 2005 and witnessed the Eelam War IV. This time under the capable leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the GSL executed focused political, economic, military and intelligence efforts primarily through the enemy centric Rajapaksa COIN Model. The Eelam War IV ended in May 2009 with the elimination of the LTTE leadership and effectively the Tamil separation movement.<sup>4</sup> The unprecedented success of the COIN model applied by a legitimate government mandates a deeper analysis to trace historical similarities and validate its future applicability. This monograph will evaluate the Rajapaksa COIN model<sup>5</sup> in comparison with Galula's COIN theory applied in Algiers from 1954 to 1957 with the purpose of recommending its suitability for a future conflict.<sup>6</sup>

The Sri Lankan Government defeated the LTTE during the Eelam War IV (2005-2009) by applying the Rajapaksa COIN Model in contrast to the previous three iterations (1983-2004) which were largely unsuccessful. The model from its conception, planning, and execution bears similarities with the Galula's COIN Theory applied in Algiers. The Rajapaksa Model focuses on a strong and dynamic military operation under a resolute political leadership as the cardinal aspect of the COIN theory. The successful application of the Rajapaksa COIN Model in the Eelam War IV proves its validity as an effective COIN theory for future application.

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<sup>3</sup>C. A. Chandrapema, *Gota's War: The Crushing of Tamil Tiger Terrorism in Sri Lanka* (Sri Lanka: Ranjan Wijeratne Foundation, 2012), 266.

<sup>4</sup>M. R. Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 2010), 179.

<sup>5</sup>The Sri Lankan Presidential Website, "President Mahinda Rajapaksa in an interview with India's Tehelka Magazine," 31 July 2009, [http://www.president.gov.lk/inter\\_New.php?Id](http://www.president.gov.lk/inter_New.php?Id) (accessed 14 August 2010).

<sup>6</sup>David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT Praeger Security International, 2006), 42.

The eight key principles of the successful Rajapaksa Model bear some startling similarities with the Galula's four COIN courses of action and eight tactical steps to defeat an insurgency. This monograph will provide an in-depth comparison of both COIN theories; focusing on the environment, planning and execution. Specifically, the role played by the political and military instruments in achieving the objectives and desired end-state of both COIN operations will be examined.

This study asserts that the Rajapaksa Model focuses on a strong and dynamic military operation under a resolute political leadership as the cardinal aspect of the COIN theory. The successful application of the Rajapaksa COIN Model in the Eelam War IV strongly suggests its validity as an effective COIN theory for future application.

The significance of the study is paramount as application of the Rajapaksa COIN model signifies how a resolute democratically elected government, having learned from its mistakes, can defeat a persistent insurgency through a focused political, economic and military strategy. In the present era of persistent unconventional conflicts the unprecedented success of a recently applied COIN model demands a deeper analysis to accrue desired lessons for the future. This study will establish its validity by comparing it with Galula's COIN theory with recommendation for future applicability.

The following terms assist in understanding the subject and are used to better frame its context.

Counterinsurgency (COIN): The military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency.<sup>7</sup>

Eelam: The homeland of the Tamil people.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 12 April 2001), 112.

<sup>8</sup>Edgar O'Balance, *The Cyanide War: Tamil Insurrection in Sri Lanka 1973-88* (London, UK: Brassey's, 1989), 12.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE): The insurgent organization determined to create an independent homeland for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The organization pioneered the use of suicide belts and suicide bombers including female suicide volunteers. Vellupilai Prabhakaran was the political and military leader of the LTTE.<sup>9</sup>

Enemy-Centric: COIN operation focused on defeating the insurgent/terrorist group.<sup>10</sup>

In this era of persistent conflict, nations will continue to face the threat of insurgencies. The complex nature of the threat emanates not only from states but also from the non-state actors which further compounds the problem. Militaries around the globe are continuously assessing and re-evaluating their COIN doctrine to keep them at pace with the changing nature of the threat.

The study will focus on the Rajapaksa COIN model and draw comparative analysis with Galula's COIN theory. A critical examination of the basic principles and key aspects of both the theories would be carried out to ascertain similarities and differences. The political and military environment faced by both Sri Lanka and Algiers serves as an important factor while determining the effectiveness of the theories from conception to execution. Comparison of the Rajapaksa Model with an already established COIN theory assists in determining the efficacy of the concept and determine its future utility as a workable COIN concept.

Two hypotheses are used to test the thesis. First, if applied properly keeping in view the peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end-state of a COIN operation. Second, if strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment.

Four research questions guide this study. First, what are the main elements of Galula's and Rajapaksa COIN Model? Second, what were the similarities in the operational environment

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<sup>9</sup>O'Balance, 13.

<sup>10</sup>U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, 2009," <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/119629> (assessed 20 August 2012).

faced in both the insurgencies? Third, what were the objectives and end-state of the COIN models? Fourth, what was the role of military operations and political leadership in successful execution of the COIN theories?

This study acknowledges three limitations. The first limitation is that the reference material would be obtained from the Combined Army Research Library at Fort Leavenworth and the global network. The second limitation is the non-availability of classified material regarding the execution of the Rajapaksa Model from GSL. However, this factor was somewhat mitigated by obtaining information from official unclassified sources. A Sri Lankan officer attending Intermediate Level Education also provided relevant material which greatly assisted the research. The third limitation is that the length of the study precludes an exhaustive review of all Eelam wars. Only Eelam War IV which was fought from 2005 to 2009 is used as a case study.

This research study is organized into five sections. Section one includes the background, problem statement, purpose, significance, definition of terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Section two presents a review of the literature, and section three explains the methodology used for the research study. Section four presents a comparative analysis of Rajapaksa and Galula's COIN theories to ascertain similarities and differences from conception to completion of operations. Section five proffers recommendations based on the applicability and effectiveness of Rajapaksa Model in a future COIN environment.

### Review of the Literature

This section presents the existing literature on the COIN doctrines of contemporary armies and establishes the foundation to study the Rajapaksa COIN Model for its applicability in a future COIN environment. A historical overview of warfare clearly identifies that insurgency and terrorism are not new phenomena. Where an insurgency brews there is often a counterinsurgency waged by the established government, an external power or a combination of

both. Since the end of the Second World War there has been a significant increase in insurgencies, uprisings, and revolutions. There are a number of mutually supporting theories that explain this with some suggesting the “crumbling of the European empires,”<sup>11</sup> and the rapid appearance of new successor states, and others blaming globalization. Whatever the causes may be for the rise in insurgencies around the world, they have forced countries to re-evaluate their capacities to counter the threat and formulate effective COIN theories. This study focuses on the successful Rajapaksa COIN Model adopted by the SLG to defeat the LTTE during Eelam War IV in order to determine whether it is a prudent model for a future conflict.<sup>12</sup> The Rajapaksa Model emphasizes the importance of a dynamic military operation under resolute political leadership to achieve a synergistic response to defeat an insurgency.<sup>13</sup> The eight cardinal points as coined by President Rajapaksa remained the guiding principles of the counterinsurgency until the complete defeat of the LTTE. In order to establish historical relevance this study also compared Galula’s COIN theory with the Rajapaksa Model with the focus on environment, planning and execution. The unprecedented success of the Rajapaksa COIN Model in defeating a protracted insurgency reaffirms that if applied properly the theory will achieve the objectives and desired end-state of a COIN operation. The following review of the literature represents the existing works pertinent to COIN theories with emphasis on the Rajapaksa Model, its historical comparison with Galula’s theory, and ascertaining its validity in a future conflict. This section is divided into five parts: the introduction, theoretical framework, conceptual definitions, empirical evidence, and summary. In order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of COIN and establish a valid theoretical

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<sup>11</sup>John Shy and Thomas Collier, “Revolutionary War,” in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 816.

<sup>12</sup>Swamy, 179.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

framework this study highlights literature regarding British, French and Sri Lankan COIN theories with the focus on their foundations and guiding concepts.

### The British Counterinsurgency

The British have a wealth of experience fighting protracted COIN campaigns with both successful and unsuccessful outcomes. In an analysis of British counterinsurgency operations from 1945 to 2011, Britain has been actively involved in COIN efforts in each of those years, often in multiple conflicts. These campaigns include action taken in Greece, Palestine, Aden, Malaya, Oman, Northern Ireland, Iraq, and Afghanistan.<sup>14</sup> Sir General Frank Kitson, a reputed theorist and professional British Army soldier for 40 years has served in four separated operational theaters: Kenya, Malaya, Oman and Cyprus, and has greatly influence the British COIN theory and practices.<sup>15</sup> Kitson believes one must ensure four critical areas when planning to counter an insurgency. The first requirement for a workable COIN campaign is good coordinating machinery.<sup>16</sup> At all levels of command a functioning, cohesive team understanding that it takes all of government resources, political, economic, developmental, or psychological, working in unison to achieve the desired end state. The second part of the framework is establishing the sort of political environment with which the government measures can be introduced with maximum likelihood of success.<sup>17</sup> The government must critically study the second and third order of effect of each action and must ensure the highest potential of success. The third part of the frame is intelligence. Kitson devotes a significant part of his writing on this

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<sup>14</sup>U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ike Skelton Chair in Counterinsurgency, "Command and General Staff College Scholars Program Counterinsurgency Research Study 2011" (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: CGSC, 2011), 32-36.

<sup>15</sup>Frank Kiston, *Bunch of Five* (London, UK: Faber and Faber Limited, 1977), ix.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 286.

aspect and emphasizes that units at all levels must tailor their intelligence organization to suit local conditions and provide timely information to the decision makers at the appropriate level.<sup>18</sup> The last aspect deals with law, which remains critical in establishing the legitimacy of the campaign. Western countries follow strict laws and guidelines, such as the Geneva Convention, and breaking these laws is out of the question. However, changing the law to support COIN efforts and minimize an insurgent's advantages is encouraged.<sup>19</sup> Sir Frank Kitson understood that a war involving insurgency was a different kind of war, but could be won by adopting a dynamic and whole of government approach.

### The French Counterinsurgency

The French, like the British have a wealth of experience with COIN operations since the end of World War II. The two most notable campaigns involving COIN were in Vietnam and Algeria as France struggled to maintain her diminishing empire.<sup>20</sup> More recently, the French have participated in a COIN operation in Afghanistan as a coalition member under the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF). David Galula, a French Army officer and COIN theorist served as a tactical level commander in Algeria and an observer in Greece. His theory on COIN has been analyzed by many contemporary armies and has a significant influence on the French COIN concept. Galula offers four laws applicable to COIN operations and bases them on his experience in Algeria. The first law states that "The support of population is as necessary for the counterinsurgents as for the insurgents."<sup>21</sup> Galula explains that it is not possible to clear an area of insurgents and their political alliance with military force alone. The government must make all

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<sup>18</sup>Kitson, 96.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 289.

<sup>20</sup>Douglas Porch, "French Imperial Warfare," in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare* (Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, 2008), 91.

<sup>21</sup>Galula, 5.



efforts to win the support of the populace as there would never be enough forces to hold all of the cleared areas. The second law states that “support is gained through an active minority.”<sup>22</sup> Here Galula divides the population into three slices: first are those in support of the government intervention or the loyalists; second, and in the majority are the undecided who make decisions on where to lend support based upon the individual or family circumstances; and third are those who actively support the insurgency or the rebels. The goal of the COIN force should be to leverage the loyalists to influence the majority of those who are undecided about whether or not to support the government’s actions. The third law states that “support of the population is conditional.”<sup>23</sup> The support from the loyalists would be impossible if they are threatened by the insurgents. The government can maintain their support only if they ensure the safety of the population from the insurgents by either destroying the insurgency or by living among the local people. The fourth law states that the “intensity of effort and vastness of means are essential.”<sup>24</sup> The government must provide the locals with economic, governmental, political, civic, and social programs so that the average person is willing to support the government and sees a positive change. The population should be convinced that they can live an improved life under the control of the government and be willing oppose the insurgency. The government and the military must work in unison toward this end.

#### The Sri Lankan Counterinsurgency

Sri Lanka has been actively involved in fighting a COIN against the LTTE since 1983.<sup>25</sup> Although the SLG has had a number of temporary policies and doctrines regarding the conduct of

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<sup>22</sup>Galula, 53.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>25</sup>Chandrapema, 32-36.

COIN operations, it never had a comprehensive COIN theory until the Rajapaksa Model was introduced in 2005. M.R Narayan Swamy is a renowned author who has published a number of books on the LTTE insurgency. His latest book, *The Tiger Vanquished*, analyzed the final collapse of the LTTE. Swamy states that the willingness of the SLG led by Rajapaksa to use all elements of national power is what defeated the LTTE.<sup>26</sup> In his book, Swamy concludes that there were five factors that ultimately led to the defeat of LTTE. The first factor was the assassination of Indian President Rajiv Gandhi, which resulted in Tamil's losing external Indian support. The second factor was the LTTE's refusal to participate in the 2003 peace talks and their continued conscription of child soldiers. The third factor was a military defection by the LTTE eastern wing led by Colonel Karuna, who is credited for the superior diplomacy of Rajapaksa. The fourth factor was the refusal of the LTTE to participate in the 2005 nationwide elections which resulted in a narrow victory for President Rajapaksa. The last factor that Swamy highlights is the unity of the top leadership of Sri Lanka. President Rajapaksa had eight principles which guided his whole of government approach in defeating the LTTE:

1. political will
2. go to hell (eliminate and annihilate)
3. no negotiations with the insurgents
4. regulate media
5. no ceasefire
6. complete operational freedom
7. initiative with young commanders
8. keep you neighbors in the loop<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Swamy, 179.

<sup>27</sup>The Sri Lankan Presidential Website, "President Mahinda Rajapaksa in an interview with India's Tehelka Magazine," 31 July 2009, [http://www.president.gov.lk/inter\\_New.php?Id](http://www.president.gov.lk/inter_New.php?Id) (accessed 14 August 2010).

Operational freedom meant that military operations took precedence over humanitarian considerations and many incidents of torture on behalf of the Sri Lankan forces were reported. The SLG denied these violations and termed them as interference by external forces in the internal affairs of the country.

There are numerous definitions of insurgency and counterinsurgency as understood by respective groups or countries keeping in view their peculiar environment and the threat they face. No two insurgencies or counterinsurgencies can be similar as each has their own dynamic, objectives and end-states. However, in order to establish a common point of reference, this study will use the definitions as given in the U.S. Army's counterinsurgency doctrine, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*. In U.S. Army doctrine, insurgency, is defined as an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict.<sup>28</sup> Counterinsurgency is defined as those military, paramilitary, economic, psychological, and civil actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency. In a counterinsurgency, Host Nation forces and partners operate to defeat armed resistance, reduce passive opposition, and establish or reestablish the legitimacy of the Host Nation Government.<sup>29</sup> A guerrilla is any insurgent who uses a weapon of any sort and does the actual fighting for the insurgency. They may conduct acts of terror, guerrilla warfare, criminal activities, or conventional warfare. They are the foot soldiers of the movement or the insurgency.<sup>30</sup>

This study proposed two hypotheses to test the successful application of the Rajapaksa COIN Model in the Eelam War IV to determine the validity as an effective COIN theory in a future conflict. The first hypothesis states that if properly applied, keeping in view the

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<sup>28</sup>Headquarters, Department of Army, Field Manual 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2009), 1-1.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 3-1.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 2-2.

peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end state of a COIN operation. Sir Robert Thompson served both as a district administrator in the Malaya Emergency in 1950's and as an advisor to the U.S. military in the 1960's. While enumerating his five principles<sup>31</sup> of COIN, Thompson substantiates Rajapaksa's first principle of political will. Throughout the Eelam War IV, Rajapaksa remained resolute and never allowed the political will of the government to decline. The aspect of regulating the media is also indirectly addressed by Kitson when he proposes changing the laws to support COIN effort and minimizing the insurgent advantage. The Rajapaksa principle of complete operational freedom to the young commander is also supported by the Kitson principle of gaining intelligence. It is through operational freedom and initiative that the desired intelligence can be gained and provided to the appropriate level to assist decision making. Adapting to the environment is also highlighted by Dr. John Mackinlay when he explains that the success in COIN in the 21st century lies in exploiting the information dimension and being able to engage social characteristics.<sup>32</sup>

The second hypothesis is that if a strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment. This is precisely the point highlighted by Galula once he demonstrated the importance of military and government working in unison. The government needs to carry out political, social and economic reforms to gain the support of the populace while the military conducts operations against the hardened insurgents. Swamy also attributed the LTTE defeat to the willingness of the SLG to apply all instruments of national power, particularly political and military. Sir Frank Kitson also highlights the importance of good coordinating machinery as a critical area to achieve success in COIN operations.

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<sup>31</sup>Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (St. Petersburg, FL: Hailer Publishing, 2005), 50-51.

<sup>32</sup>John Mackinlay, *The Insurgent Archipelago* (London, UK: Hurst and Company Publishers, 2009), 232.

This review of the literature highlighted the counterinsurgency concepts of Britain, France, and Sri Lanka. Literature from Kitson, Galula, and Swamy assisted in developing a fuller understanding of the origin of each country's COIN theories and drawing similarities and differences. It also covered the definitions of insurgency, counterinsurgency and guerrillas to give a singular point of reference and understanding throughout the study. All conceptual definitions were obtained from FM 3-24.2. Finally, this section presented the two research hypotheses and related them to the existing literature. The empirical literature review demonstrated that there are many other writers who share the same views as identified in the hypotheses and thus provided further credence to the research. The next section presents the methodology and research questions.

### Methodology

The primary aim of this study was to ascertain whether the research questions assist in conducting a comparison of Rajapaksa and Galula COIN theories and to also establish the future applicability of the Rajapaksa Model. This research analyzes two historic case studies to understand the key elements of a successful COIN strategy and how it can be applied in a future conflict. The study compared these case studies using the structured, focused comparison methodology. In addition to a description of the case studies and instrumentation, this section provides the data collection sources and expands upon the research questions outlined in the introduction. This section is comprised of six areas: the introduction, case selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and summary.

This portion of the methodology section describes the research of two historical case studies and their relevance to the study as a whole. In selecting the case studies importance was placed on similarities in operational environment and capabilities of adversaries to draw pertinent lessons and ascertain the validity of the Rajapaksa COIN Model.

The first case study analyzes the French counterinsurgency war in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 which resulted in a military success but a political defeat for France. The research focuses on lessons learned and principles offered by authors such as David Galula and Roger Trinquier based on their experience during the conflict. The case study highlights the conceptual, planning, and execution phases of the COIN operation and how the objectives and desired end state were achieved. The tactics and procedures adopted by the insurgents also form part of the case study. The case study takes a holistic account of the French COIN operations in Algeria with focus on the operational environment, implementation of the COIN concepts and lessons learned.

The second case study focuses on Sri Lankan COIN operations, under the dynamic leadership of President Rajapaksa, against the LTTE during the Eelam War IV. The case study analyzes the eight principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model and why it achieved unprecedented success in comparison to previous efforts by the SLG. The tactics and procedures adopted by the LTTE are also studied. The Rajapaksa COIN Model is analyzed in totality from its conception to planning and execution. The future applicability of the model is also ascertained by evaluating the end state of the COIN operation.

In order to guide and standardize data collection, this study used the structured, focused comparison methodology as outlined by George and Bennett.<sup>33</sup> They described the method as structured because it allows for a systematic comparison and culmination of the findings by asking the same research questions of each case study. This allows for the generation of comparable data between the two case studies that is valuable to support or reject the proposed hypotheses. The method remains focused because it only deals with certain aspects of each case study. Next is a discussion on the study's data collection, the research questions, and the expected findings.

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<sup>33</sup>Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), 67.

The collection of data for this study relied on reference material available in the Combined Army Research Library at Fort Leavenworth, and the global internet network. The collection was divided into three categories: category one includes books published by renowned authors; category two is comprised of articles and documents collected from the global internet network; and category three contains recorded interviews of prominent people and unclassified electronic material retrieved from the official SLG websites. Collection focused on analysis of the existing COIN theories of contemporary armies with focus on Galula's and Rajapaksa COIN Models.

This study used four questions to guide the research and asked these questions in each case study, which provided a qualitative comparison of the results. By using two case studies with unique characteristics, the answers to the research questions allowed for an analysis to determine the validity of the proposed hypotheses.

The first research question is: What are the main elements of Rajapaksa and Galula's COIN Models? This question provides a common starting point to both case studies. The key elements in both COIN Models are highlighted and assist in carrying out comparison at a later stage. The question addresses the key elements from both the insurgent and counterinsurgent point of view to develop a fuller understanding of the concept. Elements relating to all instruments of national power including political, economic, military, and social will be collected for a wholesome analysis.

The second question ascertains the similarities and differences between the two COIN approaches. The question highlights similarities and differences from all aspects including tactics adopted by the insurgents, the role of the military, political will, external factors and integration of insurgents in the political mainstream. The research also identifies the commonalities and differences in the operational environment and experience of key players in the COIN.

The third question asked about the objectives and end state of the COIN operations. This question provides the political, military, economic, and social objectives and end states from both sides. It helped in ascertaining whether the planning and execution of the COIN operation was successful or otherwise. Insurgents' objectives and end states are also evaluated and reasons for success or failure are established.

The final research question asked about the role of the military operations and political leadership in successful execution of both the COIN theories. The answer establishes a critical role played by both these elements of national power. A synergetic application of military operations and political will remains essential in defeating an insurgency. The role of respective governments in equipping the military, legitimizing their actions and protecting the populace is established by answering the question. The answer to this question will validate the second hypothesis.

This section restated the purpose of this research and presented the research questions in detail. The research relied on two case studies to carry out comparisons and determine the future validity of Rajapaksa COIN Model. The study used a structured, focused comparison methodology to compare the answers of the research questions asked of each case study. Data collection methods included books, articles, interviews and official documents from government websites. The study used focused research questions relating to key elements, similarities and differences, end states and objectives, and the role of the military and political leadership in both the counterinsurgencies. This section presented the anticipated answers to the research questions with an expectation that the hypotheses are valid.

### Case Studies

This section of the study highlights the background and analysis of two case studies to determine the validity of the proposed hypotheses. The researcher studied two geographically separate scenarios which deal with fighting insurgency from its conception to execution, to arrive



at a COIN theory that can offer future applicability with success. The French COIN effort in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 presents a case where a colonial power is faced with a separatist movement initially expressed through armed resistance and later leading to terrorism. The French launched a fierce military campaign against the insurgents, which initially seemed effective, however, it proved counterproductive in the long run and led to Algerian independence and the French exodus from the region. The Sri Lankan COIN scenario presents a case where an indigenous separatist movement by the Tamils threatened the sovereignty of the island state. The Sri Lankan COIN fight saw decades of conflict with no major gains, until the adoption of the Rajapaksa COIN Model in 2004 which resulted in the total defeat of the LTTE resistance. Both COIN scenarios present many similarities and differences that need to be analyzed to establish the empirical relevance and ascertain future applicability of the Rajapaksa COIN Model. Each case study comprises three parts: an overview of the case, focused questions, and analysis. The overview presents the details of the case that are relevant for analysis. The focused questions portion answers each of the research questions and provides details and evidence to support the answer. The analysis subsection restates the proposed hypotheses and uses the answers and evidence from the research questions to support, reject, or demonstrate mixed results for each hypothesis.

#### French-Algerian War

At the start of the French-Algerian War in 1954, the Muslim population of the region had been under French colonial rule for 124 years.<sup>34</sup> The vast majority of the Muslim population was severely suppressed and Arab nationalism was at its height with the colonial power weakening in its hold. The *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FLN) was formed on 30 March 1954 when a former French army sergeant, Ahmed Ben Bella, joined efforts with eight other Algerian exiles to create

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<sup>34</sup>Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York, NY: New York Book Review, 2006), 28-29.

the *Comité Révolutionnaire d'Unité et d'Action* (CRUA).<sup>35</sup> The CRUA characterized the political arm of the FLN, as well as the core nucleus of the overall group. Ben Bella along with several other original members of the CRUA would go on to establish a smaller organizational unit within the FLN specifically designed to control planned terrorist (military) operations. This military structure was named the *Armée de Libération Nationale* (ALN). The ALN would play a key role in the evolutionary development and phased transition of the FLN as terrorist attacks were established early on as an operational tactic to initially facilitate and continually support the legitimacy of the group within the Algerian population.

The focus of FLN's strategy during the initial phases of the war pivoted around creating resistance groups and cells with the sole purpose of recruiting new members and selling a pro-independence idea to the Algerian Muslim population.<sup>36</sup> Following this stage, the ALN stepped up an urban-based terrorism campaign provoking unwarranted countermeasures by the French military. These steps by the French resulted in increased support for the FLN cause and subjected the French to greater domestic and international scrutiny.

The French, relying totally on their colonial might, thought that the insurgency could be suppressed with the use of military force. Even in the military sphere they lacked a counterinsurgency doctrine that could lead them to success in Algeria. David Galula and Roger Trinquier, who were tactical commanders during the conflict, implemented their versions of counterinsurgency principles in respective zones of operation, but no such doctrine drove the overall French effort. Galula served as a captain at Djebel Mimoun, and later as a major at Kabylie from 1956 to 1958. It was from these experiences that he wrote his counterinsurgency

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<sup>35</sup>Henry F. Jackson, *The FLN in Algeria: Party Development in a Revolutionary Society* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 67-70.

<sup>36</sup>Angel Rabasa, Lesley Anne Warner, Peter Chalk, Ivan Khilko, and Shukla Paraag, "Money in the Bank: Lessons Learned from Past Counterinsurgency (COIN) Operations," RAND Counterinsurgency Study, Paper 4, National Defense Research Institute, 2007, x.

theory which is expressed in the two books he wrote after the war. Galula's Theory proposed four courses of actions and eight steps with the focus on building (or rebuilding) a political machine from the population upward.<sup>37</sup> However, during the French-Algerian War none of these principles were applied and the French military continued to operate under the political leadership based out of Paris.

The French leadership, in an effort to control a difficult situation, resorted to extreme measures by using its military to suppress the insurgency. General Jacques Massau, the French commander-in-chief, authorized massive round-ups of neighborhoods and allowed extrajudicial preemptive detentions of the FLN suspects.<sup>38</sup> The French military actions also included torture to gain information which resulted in a serious backlash and actually facilitated FLN recruiting. The French military's response to the insurgency in Algeria lacked the foresight to have a desirable end state and did not take into account the second and third order of effects of their actions. French actions caused a great deal of consternation and alienated the Muslim communities in Algeria and around the globe. Despite initial setbacks in the United Nations, by 1957 the FLN began to chalk up international victories by gaining the unified support of the Muslim World after the Arab Summit and also by shifting the American policy towards the problem.<sup>39</sup> The Algerian struggle for independence gained momentum from this external support which significantly contributed to the French changing their course on continuing war. Although by mid-1960, French forces had virtually wiped out the ALN, the FLN had been perusing its goals of Algerian self-determination, and external pressure forced the French to grant Algeria her independence through a nearly unanimous referendum on 1 July 1962. The French won the war militarily, but lost on the political front.

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<sup>37</sup>Galula, 5.

<sup>38</sup>Rabasa, et.al., 19.

<sup>39</sup>Horne, 247.

The first question is: What are the basic principles of Galula's COIN theory? Galula's theory of counterinsurgency warfare is premised on assumptions about the prerequisites and doctrine of insurgents. Based on these assumptions and patterns, he suggests a strategy offering four courses of action (COA) for a successful COIN operation. These COAs consider the laws and principles of COIN warfare and arrive at an eight-step process to build (or rebuild) a political machine from the population upward—the mandate of COIN warfare.

Galula lists four COAs available to the COIN, and they are not mutually exclusive: (1) direct action on the insurgent leaders; (2) indirect action on conditions that are favorable to an insurgency; (3) infiltrate the insurgency and disable it from within; and (4) reinforce the COIN political machine.<sup>40</sup> Galula suggests that the last COA listed, reinforce the COIN political machine, is the preferred one because it leaves the least room for uncertainty and it fully engages the COIN capabilities. In addition to the four laws of COIN warfare cited by Galula, six principles of COIN warfare are discussed as considerations in developing a successful COIN strategy.<sup>41</sup> Galula proposes that economy of force is essential for COIN forces because the insurgency needs so little to achieve so much. The insurgency must be prevented from developing into a higher form of warfare, namely organizing a regular army. Irreversibility is that critical turning point when local leaders have everything to lose from a return of the insurgency. The government should pursue an offensive counterinsurgency strategy and seize the initiative to confront the insurgent with a dilemma: accept the challenge and thus a defensive posture; or leave the area and forfeit the battle to win the population's support and allegiance. Counterinsurgency forces should be fully focused on winning and holding the support of the population to mitigate the terrain-focused nature of conventional forces. Simplicity of action provides the necessary clarity in pursuit of the population's favor. Success in such situations depends on seamless

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<sup>40</sup>Galula, 64-65.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 74-86.

transitions between COIN, civil military operations, and major combat. Synchronizing military actions with political actions under a single leader ensures that military action is not the main activity to achieve the final political end state.

Galula suggest eight tactical steps to build (or rebuild) a political machine from the population upward.<sup>42</sup> First, maneuver enough armed forces to destroy or expel the main body of armed insurgents. Second, mass static units where the population lives, to ensure local security. Third, establish contact with the people and control their movements to isolate them from the guerrillas. Fourth, destroy the local insurgent political organizations. Fifth, hold elections and establish provisional local authorities. Sixth, test these new authorities and organize self-defense units. Seventh, group and educate the leaders into a national political party. And finally, win over or suppress the last insurgent remnants. Galula describes COIN operations in textbook fashion. He describes guiding laws and principles for planning and executing operations against an insurgency.

The second research question is: What is the role of the military and political leadership in implementing the theory? Galula is a strong supporter of combined military and political effort to defeat an insurgency. Galula states that “so intricate is the interplay between the political and military actions that they cannot be tidily separated. On the contrary, every military move has to be weighted with regards to its political effects, and vice versa.”<sup>43</sup> Galula offers four laws applicable to the counterinsurgency campaign in which he has participated, and in all of them he proposes a joint politico-military involvement. The first law states “The support of the population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as for the insurgents.”<sup>44</sup> It is not possible to clear an area of insurgent forces and their associated political constructs with military forces alone. The

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<sup>42</sup>Galula, 136.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 53-54.

political machinery must make every effort to gain the support of the local populace and provide them security as the military expands its control by clearing insurgents dominated areas. All elements of the government including economic, social, psychological and developmental have to be applied in order to gain support of the masses in order for the military to secure a foothold and defeat the insurgents. The second states that “support is gained through active minority.”<sup>45</sup> Here, Galula proposes that the political and military leadership should focus on gaining the support of the majority of the fence sitters, who are weighing their options based on the success of the insurgents or counterinsurgents. The goal of the insurgents in this case is to leverage the loyalists (supporters of the government intervention) to influence the active majority of the fence sitters to support the counterinsurgency. Once the support of the majority has been secured the hard liners can be dealt with militarily. The third law applies that “ support of the population is conditional.”<sup>46</sup> Galula believes that the counterinsurgents will lose the support of the population if they are not provided security. This entails actions by both the military and political apparatus. The government should ensure economic, social and developmental security, whereas the military should be responsible for providing physical security to the masses. The last law states that “intensity of effort and vastness of means are essential.”<sup>47</sup> The government must inject the local area with economic, social, civic and educational programs so that the average citizen witnesses positive change. The locals should feel that life under the government is considerably better than that under the insurgents. This can only be achieved by combined and seamless efforts on the part of the political and military leadership carrying out the counterinsurgency.

The third research question is: What were the objectives and end state of the French COIN and were they achieved? The answer to the first part of the question is that at the strategic

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<sup>45</sup>Galula, 53-54.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 55.

tier the French objective in Algeria was the total defeat of the insurgency with a liberal French democratic Algeria as the end state. At the operational level, the French COIN objectives were expressed in *guerre revolutionnaire* which were: isolating the insurgency from support; providing local security; executing effective strike operations; establishing French political legitimacy and effective indigenous political and military forces; and establishing a robust intelligence capability.<sup>48</sup> The operational objectives were also linked with strategic end state of an Algerian state under French control. The French, through effective changes in their operational approach, were able to achieve almost all of their above stated operational objectives but failed at achieving their strategic objective and the end state. By 1960 the French Army essentially eliminated the insurgents' ability to conduct effective military operations and had significantly degraded the insurgent organization in Algeria.<sup>49</sup> Though pacified, the Algerian Muslim population was less inclined to accept French rule in 1960 than they were in 1954.<sup>50</sup> A significant portion of the French population that had supported the war in 1954 had turned against the government's Algerian policy. Within the army itself, dissension ran rampant as various factions viewed government policy as too aggressive, not aggressive enough, or immoral.<sup>51</sup> All of these conditions were directly or indirectly related to command policies which condoned harsh tactical interrogation techniques including torture. This principally flawed approach by the French led to Algerian independence in 1962 and end of French colonial rule.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Lou Demarco, "Losing the Moral Compass: Torture and Guerre Revolutionnnarie in the Algerian War," *Parameters* (Summer 2006): 68.

<sup>49</sup>Demarco, 68.

<sup>50</sup>Galula, 63-92.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>52</sup>Dieter Nohlen and Philip Stover, eds., *Elections in Europe: a Data Handbook*, 1st ed. (Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2010), 674.

The fourth research question is: What are the similarities and differences between the Galula and Rajapaksa COIN Models? To effectively answer this question, this research highlights similarities and differences in the environment, the tactics adopted by both insurgents and lastly the rules/principles proffered by both Galula and Rajapaksa.

The environment in Algeria and Sri Lanka differed on many accounts. First, the French counterinsurgency aimed at retaining its colonial grip over Algeria, whereas the Sri Lankan counterinsurgency was trying to establish control over its own territory. Second, the Tamils in Sri Lanka were a minority conducting an insurgency against the Sinhalese majority, whereas the French were fighting the Muslims who were a predominant majority in Algeria.<sup>53</sup> Third, the French, due to their aggressive approach, lost international support, whereas the Sri Lankans, through a dynamic foreign policy and tight grip over the media, continued to maintain global support for their efforts. The similarities in environment existed in the shape of external influence on both the insurgencies. In Algeria there was considerable financial, material, and popular support for the insurgency from the Muslims and from neighboring Tunisia and Morocco.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Sri Lanka, the support to the Tamils came from the Indian Tamil population. Both the insurgencies had strong Diasporas which supported the respective insurgencies.<sup>55</sup>

The tactics adopted by both the Tamils in Sri Lanka and the Muslims in Algeria bore many similarities. Both the insurgencies began by forming a broader base to support their cause. The Muslims in Algeria formed the FLN and the ALN, whereas the Tamils formed the LTTE. Thereafter, both resorted to hit and run tactics to invite aggressive response from the opponents

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<sup>53</sup>The Official Site of the Government of Sri Lanka, "Population Censuses in Sri Lanka," Population and Census Department, <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/PDF/p7%20population%20and%20Housing%20Text-11-12-06.pdf> (accessed 31 October 2012).

<sup>54</sup>Demarco, 67.

<sup>55</sup>International Crisis Group, "The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora after the LTTE," <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/186%20The%20Sri%20Lankan%20Tamil%20Diaspora%20after%20the%20LTTE.pdf> (accessed 29 May 2012).



and thereby gain support from the local populace. Having achieved the support from the population, both insurgencies transformed to a more organized form of urban terrorism to attack the government's legitimacy and control over the masses. Both insurgencies effectively used propaganda to sell their cause, not only to the population, but also to the external audience. The major difference existed in the role of leadership in both insurgencies. In the Algerian insurgency no single leader of FLN held ultimate authority. Therefore despite many being captured and killed, the insurgency continued towards its aim of independent Algeria.<sup>56</sup> In the case of the LTTE, Velupillai Prabhakaran held the ultimate authority and controlled all aspects of the insurgency.<sup>57</sup> Therefore after his death in May 2009, for all practical purposes, the insurgency was defeated. Another significant difference was in the organization and capability of both the insurgencies. The Algerian insurgency was based on loosely connected insurgent cells, whereas LTTE was a more organized insurgent force with integral ground, air, and naval forces.<sup>58</sup> Table 1 highlights the similarities and differences between the Galula and Rajapaksa COIN Models.

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<sup>56</sup>Horne, 75.

<sup>57</sup>Swamy, 36-37.

<sup>58</sup>Bruce Vaughn, Congressional Research Service Report RL31707, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations* (Washington, DC: CRS, Library of Congress, 5 November 2003), 4.

Table 1. COIN Model Comparison

Rajapaksa Principles	Galula Tactical Steps <sup>59</sup>
Political will	Maneuver enough armed forces to destroy or expel the main body of armed insurgents.
Go to hell (that is, ignore domestic and international criticism)	Mass static units where the population lives, to ensure local security.
No negotiations	Establish contact with the people and control their movement to isolate them from the guerrillas.
Regulate media	Destroy the local insurgent political organizations.
No ceasefire	Hold elections and establish provisional local authorities.
Complete operational freedom	Test these new authorities and organize self-defense units.
Accent on young commanders	Group and educate the leaders in a national political party.
Keep your neighbors in the loop	Win over or suppress the last insurgent remnants.

Source: Neil A. Smith, "Understanding Sri Lanka's Defeat of the Tamil Tigers," *Joint Forces Quarterly* (4 September 2010), <http://www.ndu.edu/press/understanding-sri-lanka.html> (accessed 6 November 2012).

The Rajapaksa Model proposes a more aggressive approach primarily because Sri Lanka had fought the LTTE for more than two decades without any peaceful solution. The Galula Model recommends a more political solution to the insurgency. Both models recommend isolation of the insurgents from the masses and complete freedom for the counterinsurgency forces. Rajapaksa and Galula both recommend tight regulation of the media in order to achieve success in the counterinsurgency. Both models see the end state as the complete suppression or winning over of the insurgency.

The first hypothesis states that, if properly applied, keeping in view the peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end state of a

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<sup>59</sup>Galula, 55-56.

COIN operation. A comparative analysis of French and Sri Lankan COIN operations with special focus on operational environment, implementation and lessons accrued suggests that hypothesis yielded mixed results. In carrying out the comparative study of the Galula and Rajapaksha COIN Models it has been observed that certain aspects of the Rajapaksa Model may be too aggressive and may negatively affect the outcome of a future COIN operation. The second hypothesis states that if strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory, it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment. The important role of both military and political leadership as proposed in the Galula COIN theory and the Rajapaksa Model suggests that hypothesis two is strongly supported.

### Eelam War

Sri Lanka is an ethnically diverse state with a total population of 19 million. The Sinhalese who comprise 81.9 percent of the total population are the most dominant ethnic group. As a contrast, only 18 percent are Tamils and eight percent are Moors. Seventy-two percent of the total population are Buddhist, most of whom are Sinhalese, and 15.5 percent follow Hinduism most of whom are Tamils. Again, Sinhala is the language of the Sinhalese majority of Sri Lanka, while Tamil is an important minority language widely spoken in the northern and eastern parts of the country.<sup>60</sup> The ethnic diversity of Sri Lanka has been a constant factor working against national harmony. As ethnic tension grew in 1976, the LTTE was formed under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran, and it began to campaign for a Tamil homeland in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.<sup>61</sup> In 1983, the LTTE ambushed an army convoy, killing 13 soldiers and triggering riots in which 2,500 Tamils died.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Sri Lanka.”

<sup>61</sup>Kingsley De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981), 6.

<sup>62</sup>O’Balance, 21.

India, which has its own Tamil population in the south, deployed a peacekeeping force in 1987 which left three years later amidst escalating violence. During the ensuing conflict, the LTTE emerged as a fearsome terrorist organization, famed for suicide bombings, recruitment of child soldiers, and the ability to challenge Sri Lankan forces from the Jaffna Peninsula in the north down through the eastern side of the island.<sup>63</sup>

For over two decades (1983-2005) Sri Lanka struggled against a well-organized and active insurgency by the LTTE. During this period, repeated political dialogue and military operations were conducted which remained unsuccessful in establishing sustained peace. Sri Lankan COIN strategy during this period lacked the political will or military plan to comprehensively defeat the LTTE. A number of cease fire agreements and peace deals were made only to subsequently be broken by both sides.<sup>64</sup> In November of 2005, Mahinda Rajapaksa won the Sri Lankan national election with the promise to put an end to this long insurgency.<sup>65</sup> President Rajapaksa formulated the eight point Rajapaksa COIN Model with focus on strong and dynamic military operations under a resolute political leadership. It was through the application of this model during the Eelam War IV that the GSL was able to kill the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran, and secure a complete demise of the insurgency.<sup>66</sup> The unprecedented success of the Rajapaksa COIN Model against one of the world's most well-organized and ruthless insurgencies demands deeper analysis and better understanding for its future application.

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<sup>63</sup>K. M. De Silva, *Pursuit of Peace in Sri Lanka: Past Failures and Future Prospects*, (Kandy, Sri Lanka: ICES 2001), 232-262.

<sup>64</sup>Swamy, Chapter 1.

<sup>65</sup>S. Narapalasingam, "In Retrospect: 2005 Presidential Election, LTTE Boycott and Heroes' Day Address," Tamilweek.com, 27 April 2007, <http://tamilweek.com/news-features/archives/921> (accessed 14 December 2012).

<sup>66</sup>Vasanth R. Ragavan, *Peace Process in Sri Lanka, Challenges and Opportunities* (Chennai, India: East West Books, 2007), 72-93.

The first question is: What are the principles of Rajapaksa COIN Model? President Rajapaksa won the election in 2005 on a promise to put an end to the lingering insurgency. In formulating his COIN strategy he critically studied the Sri Lankan effort from the very start of the insurgency and identified a potential area of focus. The main ingredients of his strategy were a strong and resolute political apparatus with an effective military operation directed at the core of the insurgency. The Rajapaksa COIN Model is eight main principles: political will; go to hell (that is, ignore domestic and international criticism); no negotiations with the militants; regulate the media; no cease fire; complete operational freedom; accent on young commanders; and keep your neighbors in the loop.<sup>67</sup>

The first fundamental of the Rajapaksa COIN Model is a fully committed and unwavering political will to eliminate the insurgency. It serves as a pre-requisite to an effective military action against the military. President Rajapaksa gave a clear order to the Sri Lankan Military led by General Sarath Fonseka to eliminate the LTTE. To legitimize the military actions he formulated a dynamic political strategy for internal and external audience, not only to understand but in most cases support the actions by his government. Through this political strategy he managed to avoid domestic and international pressure and give the military the space to counter the insurgency. This is best explained in the words of General Fonseka after the fall of LTTE:

It is the political leadership with the commitment of the military that led the battle to success. We have the best political leadership to destroy terrorism in this country. It was never there before to this extent. The military achieved these war victories after President Mahinda Rajapaksha came into power. He, who believed that terrorism should and could be eliminated, gave priority to go ahead with our military strategies. And no Defense Secretary was there like the present Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa who

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<sup>67</sup>V.K. Shashikumar, "Lessons from the War in Sri Lanka," *Indian Defense Review* (2009), <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/2009/10/lessons-from-the-war-in-sri-lanka.html> (accessed 12 January 2012).

had the same commitment and knowledge on how to crush the LTTE. Finally, they gave me the chance of going ahead with the military plan.<sup>68</sup>

The second key ingredient of the strategy was saying “go to hell” to any domestic or international player who opposed definite action against the LTTE.<sup>69</sup> As odd as it may sound, this was an important factor resulting in the success of the SLG. Rajapaksa, using the previous three Eelam Wars as examples, highlighted that every cease fire or negotiation had been used by the LTTE to regroup and consolidate in order to resume attacks on the government force. This fundamental of the strategy was used in conjunction with the key operational terms of “Eliminate” and “Annihilate” as the logical end to the insurgency. The same logic supported having no negotiations or ceasefire with the LTTE which are the third and fifth principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model.<sup>70</sup>

Another important component of the COIN Model was the regulation of the media. Rajapaksa kept a very tight control over what was being reported about the war. A minimal and restricted access to the war zone facilitated implementation of this principle. With only the government’s official version of war available, Rajapaksa was able to direct the flow and content of information regarding the war. The messaging by Tamilnet, the official website of the Tamils, also could not be independently verified due to the regulated access to the war zone. Rajapaksa believed that in the previous three Eelam Wars once the military was about to conduct a decisive operation against the LTTE, the international players demanded a cease fire or a peace dialogue

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<sup>68</sup>Shashikumar, “Lessons from the War in Sri Lanka.”

<sup>69</sup>Neil A. Smith, “Understanding Sri Lanka’s Defeat of the Tamil Tigers,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* (4 September 2010), <http://www.ndu.edu/press/understanding-sri-lanka.html> (accessed 6 November 2012).

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

which allowed the LTTE to regroup or consolidate. By regulating the media, Rajapaksa minimized the internal and external interference to his COIN conflict.<sup>71</sup>

One of the most important principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model is to accord complete operational freedom to the military. President Rajapaksa was able to achieve the highest political-military coordination and extend operational freedom through the appointment of his brother Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as the defense secretary. Gotabhaya, with his prior military service, understood the requirements of the military and how to equip them for success. He ensured that the political and military objectives coincided and that no gaps existed in the implementation. To lead the military, Gotabhaya brought General Fonseka back from retirement and gave him total freedom to select his team. The Rajapaksa brothers understood that General Fonseka was a firm believer of the use of the military to eliminate the LTTE and gave him the political backing to complete the mission.

The Rajapaksa COIN Model strongly supports the ascent to young commanders. He allowed his military leadership to select young and dynamic commanders on the field who could get the job done. Selection to command positions were not done on seniority, but rather on the ability of a commander to lead men and make timely unsupervised decisions. This provided the Sri Lankan military with the young and bold tactical leadership required to eliminate the LTTE.<sup>72</sup> These tactical commanders were afforded complete freedom of action within their area of responsibility to employ forces as deemed appropriate to achieve the objective. This principle went a long way in promoting professionalism in the rank and file of the Sri Lankan military.

The last principle of the Rajapaksa COIN Model is to keep your neighbor in the loop which focused on Indian support to the Sri Lankan cause. Rajapaksa, through a dynamic foreign policy, established cordial relations with the Indians and gained their support against the LTTE.

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<sup>71</sup>Shashikumar, “Lessons from the War in Sri Lanka.”

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

The most crucial assistance provided by the Indians was the naval intelligence on the movement of Tamil Naval (Sea Tigers) vessels that sustained their forces. Based on intelligence provided by the Indians, the Sri Lankan Navy was able to interdict the supply vessels and create a sustainment problem for the Tamils.<sup>73</sup> Rajapaksa believed in keeping India involved in his fight and yielded maximum support from them.

The second research question is what is the role of the military and political leadership in implementing the theory? The Rajapaksa COIN Model envisages a critical role of political and military leadership in the success against the insurgency. The main tenets of the Model are based on a strong and dynamic military operation backed with a resolute and unwavering political will. The importance of political and military leadership in implementing the Rajapaksa COIN Model can be further explained by the fact that President Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed his brother Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as the defense secretary to oversee the military operation.<sup>74</sup> The success of the Sri Lankan Government in Eelam War IV as compared to previous three unsuccessful iterations can also be attributed to the role played by the political and military leadership. In the first three Eelam Wars, the Sri Lankan Government failed to unite the political and military objectives which resulted in an inclusive end to COIN operations. An analysis of the eight principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model also highlights the importance of the political and military leadership as all apply to either one of the two.

At the operational level, the Rajapaksa brothers were very careful in selecting the right leadership for the military. They called back General Fonseka from retirement because they knew that he was a strong supporter of using military to crush the LTTE and also that he enjoyed the

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<sup>73</sup>Nitin A. Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace* (New Dehli, India: Har-Anand Publications, 2009), 34-74.

<sup>74</sup>Chandrapema, 290.



loyalty of the military .<sup>75</sup> General Fonseka also used the same foresight in selecting the tactical commander to accomplish the mission. Commanders were not selected on seniority, but rather on their ability to deliver in demanding situations. Therefore, the role of political and military leadership in successful implementation of the Rajapaksa Model is absolutely critical and essential.

The third research question is: What were the objectives and end state of the Sri Lankan COIN and were they achieved? The objective of the Sri Lankan COIN operations was the complete annihilation of the LTTE with the end state of establishing government control over the entire island state.<sup>76</sup> The SLG through a combination of political will and military operations was able to achieve the objective of the COIN. They successfully killed the leader of LTTE, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and with him the insurgency. However, many believe that the Sri Lankan Military resorted to unwarranted means to achieve their objective and many cases of humanitarian violations were reported. The limited knowledge of such violations by the world further substantiate the importance of media control. Towards that end state, the SLG under President Rajapaksa, may have established physical control over its territory, however it faces an uphill task of ensuring political and cultural integration of the Tamils to prevent a resurrection in the future. The task of Rajapaksa's administration remains unfinished until all ethnic groups have equal political, social, and economic rights under a national government.

The fourth question covers the similarities and differences between the Galula and Rajapaksa COIN Models. This has been covered as part of the Algerian case study.

The first hypothesis states that, if properly applied, keeping in view the peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end state of a

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<sup>75</sup>Chandrapema, 292.

<sup>76</sup>Minhinda Chinthana, "Minhinda Chinthana [Vision of Mahinda]," Official Manifesto by Mahinda Rajapaksa Published prior to the 2005 Presidential Election, [www.president.gov.lk/pdfs/MahindaChinthanaEnglish.pdf](http://www.president.gov.lk/pdfs/MahindaChinthanaEnglish.pdf) (accessed 3 January 2013).

COIN operation. A critical analysis of the Sri Lankan COIN operations with focus on the effectiveness of the Rajapaksa COIN Model and the role of military and political leadership, suggests that hypothesis yields mixed results. Though some principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model are found to be very pertinent, others are considered too ruthless in a different setting and actually hinder achievement of the desired end state of a COIN operation. The principle of ‘go to hell’ will not go over well with countries which have alliances and relations with other countries. In the present era of freedom of speech the strict regulation of media would mean infringement of these rights and would cause a serious global concern. The principles of no negotiations and no cease-fire may have worked well for Sri Lanka due to their peculiar history of COIN operations. However, it may not be a viable option in other COIN conflicts. The second hypothesis states that if a strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment. The important role of both military and political leadership in the Rajapaksa Model suggests that hypothesis too is strongly supported.

### Cross Case Analysis and Findings

The purpose of this section is to conduct a cross analysis of the two cases examined in the previous section. This section comprises three parts: a review of the findings from each case study; a determination of whether or not the findings support the proposed hypotheses; and a conclusion discussing the validity of the hypotheses.

What are the principles of Galula COIN Theory and Rajapaksa COIN Model? Galula lists four COAs available to the COIN and they are not mutually exclusive:

1. direct action on the insurgent leaders
2. indirect action on conditions that are favorable to an insurgency
3. infiltration the insurgency and to disable it from within

4. to reinforce the COIN political machine.

Galula suggests that the last COA listed, to reinforce the COIN political machine, is the preferred one because it leaves the least room for uncertainty and it fully engages the COIN capabilities. In addition to the COAs, Galula also proffers six principles of COIN warfare and eight tactical steps to successfully conduct COIN. The Rajapaksa COIN Model has eight main principles: political will; go to hell (that is, ignore domestic and international criticism); no negotiations with the militants; regulate the media; no cease fire; complete operational freedom; accent on young commanders, and keep your neighbors in the loop.

What is the role of the military and political leadership in implementing the theory? Both Galula and Rajapaksa are strong supporters of combined military and political efforts to defeat an insurgency. Galula states that “so intricate is the interplay between the political and military actions that they cannot be tidily separated; on the contrary, every military move has to be weighted with regards to its political effects, and vice versa.”<sup>77</sup> The Rajapaksa COIN Model envisages the critical role of political and military leadership in the success against the insurgency. The main tenets of his model are based on a strong and dynamic military operation backed with a resolute and unwavering political will. The importance of political and military leadership in implementing the Rajapaksa COIN Model can be further substantiated by the fact that President Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed his brother Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as the defense secretary to oversee the military operation.

What were the objectives and end states of the Algerian and the Sri Lankan COIN operations and were they achieved? At the strategic tier of the Algerian COIN, the French objective in Algeria was the total defeat of the insurgency with a liberal French democratic

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<sup>77</sup>Galula, 5.

Algeria as the end state. At the operational level the French COIN objectives were expressed in *guerre revolutionnaire* which were: isolating the insurgency from support; providing local security; executing effective strike operations; establishing French political legitimacy and effective indigenous political and military forces; and establishing a robust intelligence capability. The operational objectives were also linked with the strategic end state of an Algerian state under French control. The French, through effective changes in their operational approach, were able to achieve almost all of their operational objectives, but failed to achieve the operational or strategic end state of continuing the French colonial rule over Algeria. As for the Sri Lankans, the objective of the COIN was the complete annihilation of LTTE with an end state of establishing government control over the entire island state. The SLG, through a combination of political will and military operations, were able to achieve the objective of the COIN. They successfully killed the leader of LTTE, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and with him, the insurgency. However, many believe that the Sri Lankan military resorted to unwarranted means to achieve their objective and many cases of humanitarian violations were reported. As for the end state, the SLG, under President Rajapaksa, may have established physical control over its territory; however it faces an uphill task of ensuring political and cultural integration of the Tamils to prevent a resurrection.

What are the similarities and differences between the Galula and Rajapaksa COIN Models? The similarities and difference are shown in the table 2.

Table 2. Similarities and Differences between Galula and Rajapaksa COIN Models

Similarities	Differences
Strong diaspora	French were conducting COIN to retain colonial control, whereas the Sri Lankans were fighting to gain control of their own territory.
External Support	Tamils were a minority in Sri Lanka, whereas the French were fighting the Muslim majority.
Broader base to support insurgency	French lost international support for their actions, whereas the Sri Lankans maintained that support.
Hit and run tactics adopted by insurgents	ALN had no ultimate leader, whereas Prabhakarn enjoyed total control over LTTE.
Effective use of propaganda	ALN was a loose insurgent cell, whereas LTTE was very well organized with Army, Navy and Air Force.

*Source:* Created by author.

Table 3. Summary of Findings from the Case Studies

	Algeria- Galula	Sri Lanka- Rajapaksa
Principles of COIN	<p>Direct action on the insurgent leaders.</p> <p>Indirect action on conditions that are favorable to an insurgency.</p> <p>Infiltrate the insurgency and disable it from within.</p> <p>Reinforce the COIN political machine.</p>	<p>Political will.</p> <p>Go to hell (that is, ignore domestic and international criticism).</p> <p>No negotiations with the militants.</p> <p>Regulate the media.</p> <p>No cease fire.</p> <p>Complete operational freedom.</p> <p>Accent on young commanders.</p> <p>Keep your neighbors in the loop.</p>
Role of political and military leadership	Strong role by political and military leadership.	Strong role by political and military leadership.
Objectives and desired end states	Defeat of ALN and continue French colonial rule.	Defeat LTTE and establish government control.
Similarities and differences	See table 2	

Source: Created by author.

The first hypothesis states that, if properly applied, keeping in view the peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end state of a COIN operation. Although some principles of the Rajapaksa COIN Model are found to be very pertinent, others are considered too ruthless in a different setting and would actually hinder achievement of the desired end state of a COIN operation. The principle of “go to hell” will not go over well with countries having alliances and relations with other countries. In the present era of freedom of speech, the strict regulation of media would mean infringement of these rights and would cause a serious global concern. The principles of no negotiations and no cease-fire may

have worked well for Sri Lankans due to their peculiar history of COIN operations, however they may not be a viable option in other COIN conflicts.

The second hypothesis states that if strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment. The important role of both military and political leadership as proposed in the Galula COIN theory and the Rajapaksa Model suggests that hypothesis two is strongly supported.

Table 4. Summary of Hypothesis Findings

	Algerial-Galula	Sri Lanka - Rajapaksa	Hypotheses Outcome
If properly applied, keeping in view the peculiarities of the environment, the Rajapaksa Model will achieve the objectives and desired end state of a COIN operation.	Mixed result	Mixed result	Mixed result
If strong military and resolute leadership are the key elements of a COIN theory it will succeed in defeating the insurgency in a future environment.	Supported	Supported	Supported

*Source:* Created by author.

### Conclusion

History is replete with examples of insurgencies and this phenomenon will continue to take place as long as there is warfare. States faced with insurgencies will endeavor to chalk out dynamic counterinsurgency strategies that lead them most quickly to their desired end state. However, no insurgency will pose the single kind of threat, environment, and condition to apply a universally approved solution to the problem. This study took the opportunity to research the successful Rajapaksa COIN Model applied by Sri Lanka to defeat the LTTE with the purpose of

ascertaining its applicability in future COIN environments. During the course of the study the researcher also carried out comparative analysis with the Galula COIN theory applied in Algeria in order to establish the imperial relevance of the Rajapaksa Model. The research also looked into the importance of strong military and resolute political leadership in reaching its desired end state while conducting COIN.

The Rajapaksa COIN Model proved highly successful for the Sri Lankans in defeating a three decade old insurgency; however, the study identified that all eight principles of the model will not yield positive results if applied to different COIN scenarios in the future. The Rajapaksa COIN Model's principles of "go to hell", no cease-fire, no negotiations, and regulating the media can adversely influence a COIN fight. Therefore a complete application of the model is not recommended.

The analysis of the Sri Lankan and Algerian COIN operations amply highlighted the significant role played by political and military leadership in a successful COIN operation. It is the combined effect of both these instruments of power that lead to success in COIN operations. It remains essential that both political and military leadership share the same objectives and end states and work together towards that end.

No strategy, no matter how effective, can stand the test of time. There needs to be a considerable effort to continuously change or upgrade it to meet the ever changing nature of threat. The Rajapaksa COIN Model presents a successful model which suited the environment in which it was applied. The complete application of such an aggressive approach is largely unacceptable due to freedom of speech and humanitarian concerns. However, it should not discourage us from utilizing the positive aspects of the model.

As operational planners we should endeavor to equip ourselves with all the knowledge and experience in order to make the correct recommendation to the policy makers for a decision. We must go through the academic and intellectual rigor to prepare ourselves to solve complex



problems in a time constrained environment. While formulating a COIN strategy we must study all contours of the problem to include but not limited to the threat, population, culture, religious affiliations, external support and capabilities. We must also see our action through a moral and ethical prism to make sure that we are maintaining legitimacy. The Sri Lankan COIN operation by no means provide us with an ideal COIN strategy nor can it prepare us fully for a future COIN fight, but it does offer us a model to study and draw lessons from.

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